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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/758,697	01/14/2004	Homer Eaton	ROMINC.004A	4972

20995 7590 08/15/2005

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EXAMINER

FITZGERALD, JOHN P

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2856

DATE MAILED: 08/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/758,697

Applicant(s)

EATON, HOMER

Examiner

John P. Fitzgerald

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8M

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 May 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18, 21-24, 31-39, 41 and 45-74 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 39, 41 and 45-72 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15, 21-24, 31, 73 and 74 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/7/04; 5/20/05; 5/9/05
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 19, 20, 25-30, 40, 42-44 and 75-86 are cancelled by Applicant, and thus withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 20 May 2005.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement filed 05 May 2005 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2), which requires a legible copy of each cited foreign patent document; each non-patent literature publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and all other information or that portion which caused it to be listed. It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

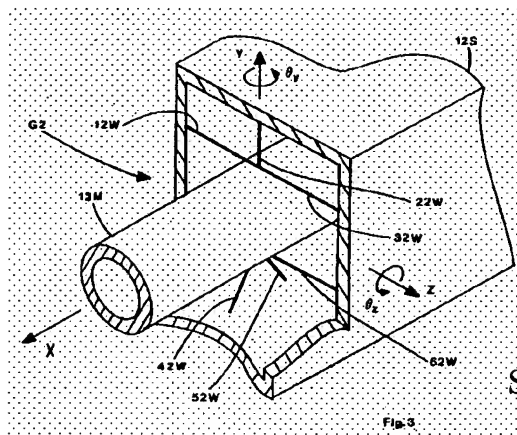
(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 6-15, 21-24, 31, 73 and 74 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 4,676,002 to Slocum. Slocum teaches a positioning system (Figs. 1-20) and

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method for positioning an articulated measuring arm having an articulated supporting arm (1S, 2S, 3S, 4S, 5S and 6S) comprising of plurality of jointly interconnected support arm segments moveable about a plurality of axes; a plurality of compliant members (12W, 22W, 32W, 42W, 52W 62W, 84W, 85W, 94W) (see Figs. 3 and 4 below) positioned on the supporting arm; and an articulated measuring arm (1M, 2M, 3M, 4M, 5M and 6M) comprising a plurality of jointly interconnected measuring arm segments capable of a plurality of degrees of freedom of movement and supported by the compliant members wherein the compliant members provide a yielding characteristic (i.e. made of a deformable material, as recited in claim 13) as well as a constrained range of alignment (as recited in claim 23) between the articulated supporting arm and the articulated measuring arm allowing for a degree of angular offset between the support arm and the measuring arm segments (Slocum: col. 10, lines 15 to col. 11, line 7) (as recited in claims 1, 10, 11, 73 and 74) as well as positioning and supporting the measuring arm segments with the support segments (as recited in claims 9, 73 and 74); wherein the supporting arm and the measuring arm are co-axially aligned such that the movement of the supporting arm effectuates movement of the measuring arm (as recited in claims 6 & 7); wherein the support arm segments are shaped to partially contain the measuring arm segments (as recited in claim 8); wherein the compliant members can be chosen from magnetic levitation, air bearings (i.e. gas-filled chamber, as recited in claim 15), ball bearings, wire supports (i.e. metal/spring material, as recited in claim 14) and wherein a controller is configured to direct the positioning of the supporting arm (Slocum: Fig. 18). As to claims 12, 21, 22, 24, 73 and 74, the reduction of mechanical stress (i.e. load sharing/reduction/transfer, thermal isolation (an air gap provides thermal isolation) and physical perturbations/vibrations are inherent features of the compliant members and, as such,

the compliant members disclosed by Slocum clearly meet these ‘physical’ limitations and will function accordingly.



Slocum

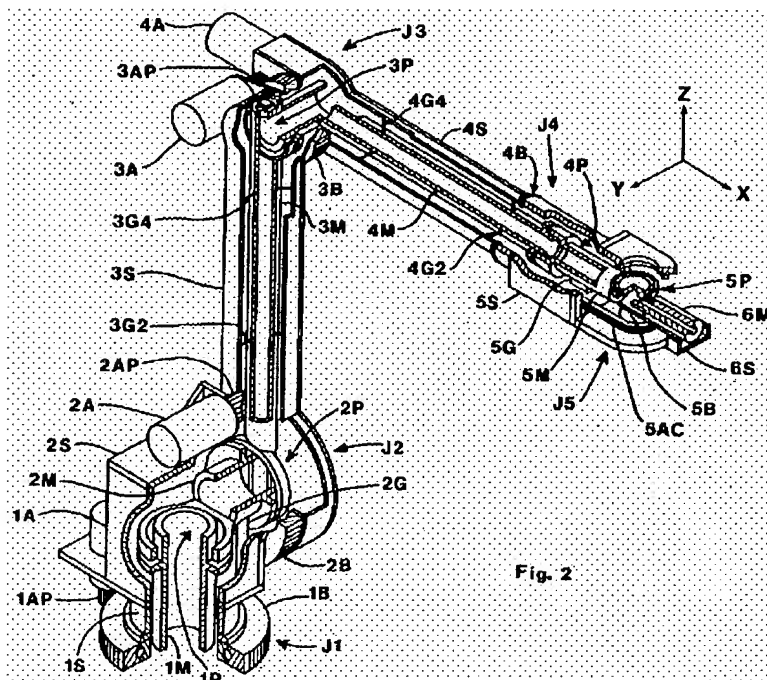
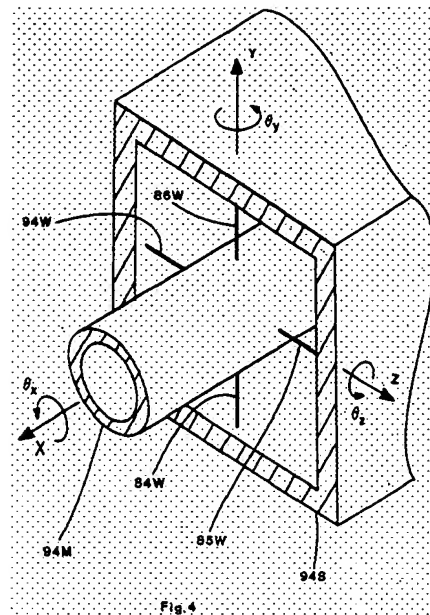
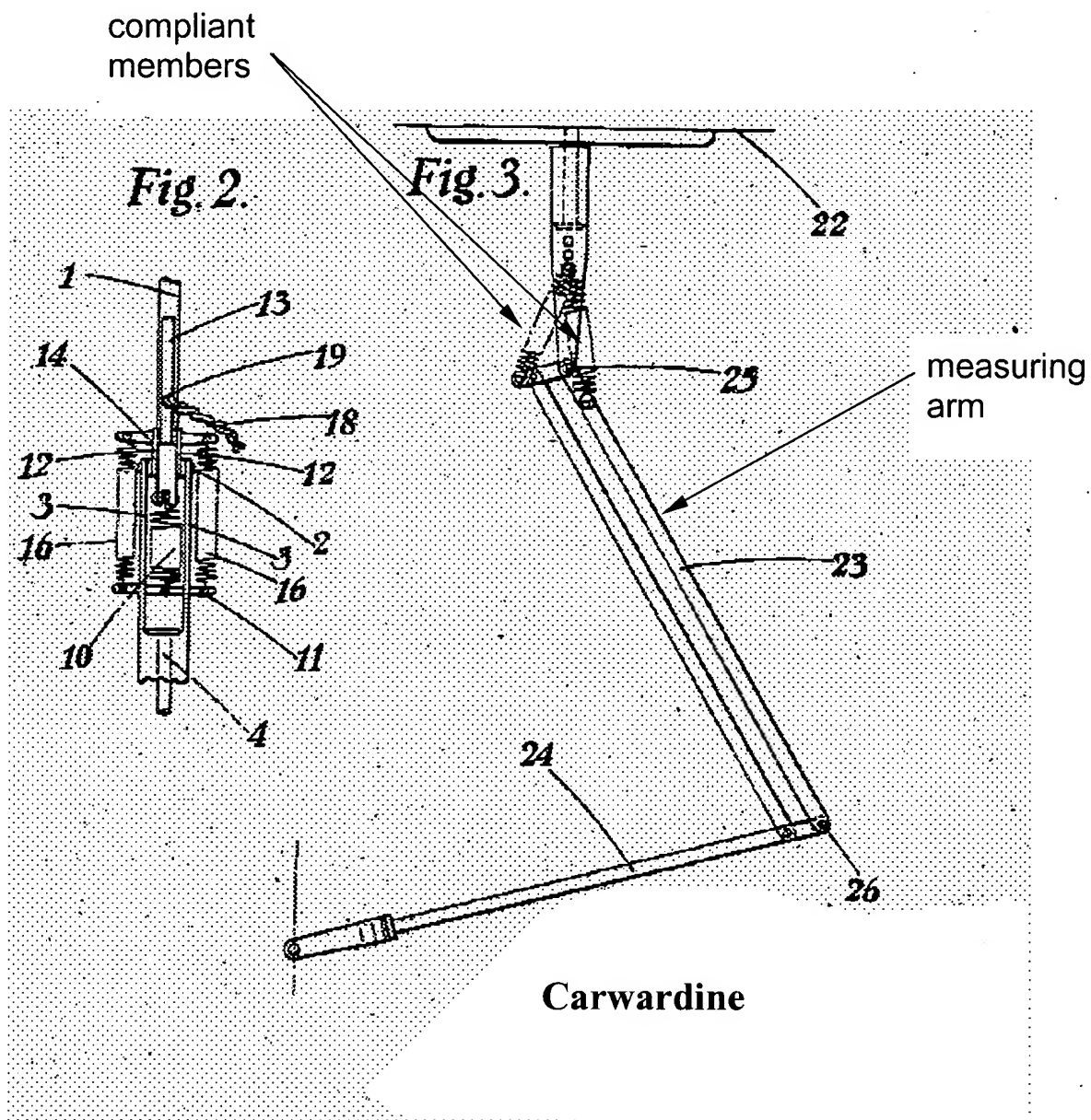


Fig. 2

3. Claim 73 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 2,076,446 to Carwardine. Carwardine discloses a method and apparatus for positioning an articulated

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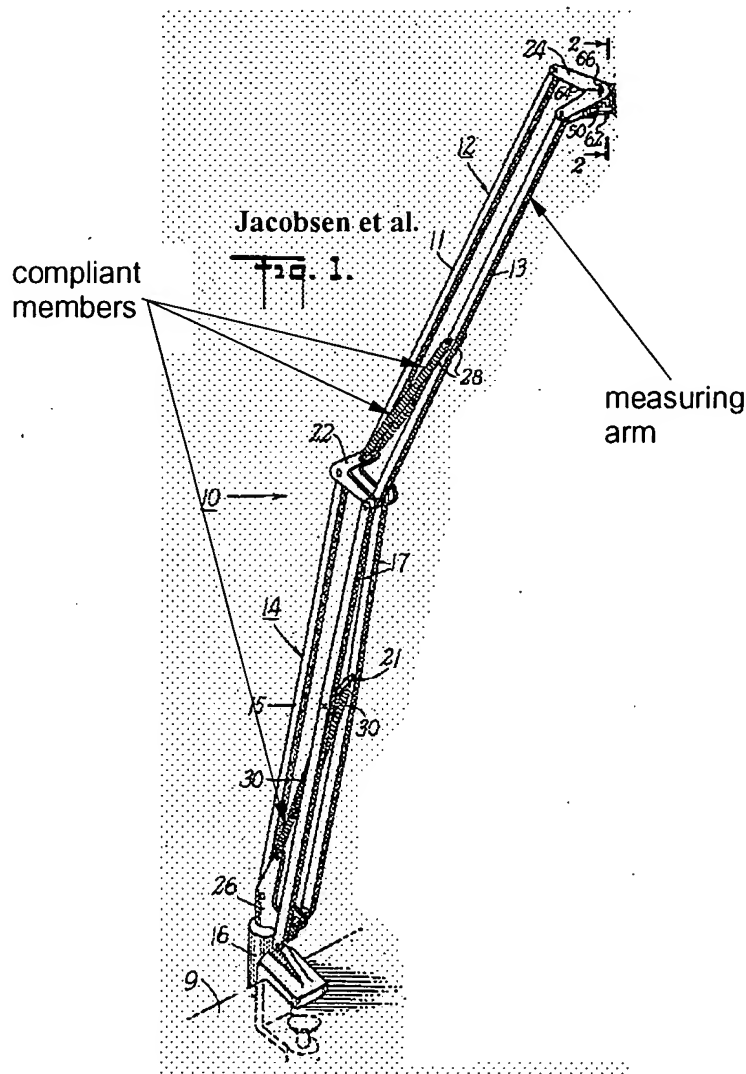
measuring arm (23) (see Fig. 3 below) including supporting the arm at a plurality of locations with compliant members (10, 16) to reduce mechanical stress on the arm (i.e. forces balanced and steady positioning of the arm).



4. Claim 73 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 2,787,434 to Jacobsen. Jacobsen discloses a method and apparatus for positioning an articulated measuring

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arm (13) (see Fig. 1 below) including supporting the arm at a plurality of locations with compliant members (30, 26) to reduce mechanical stress on the arm (i.e. forces balanced and steady positioning of the arm).



Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

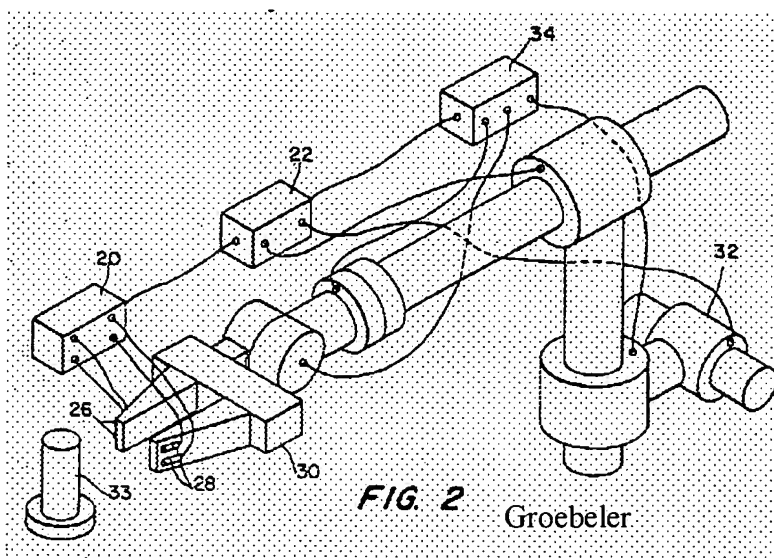
5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

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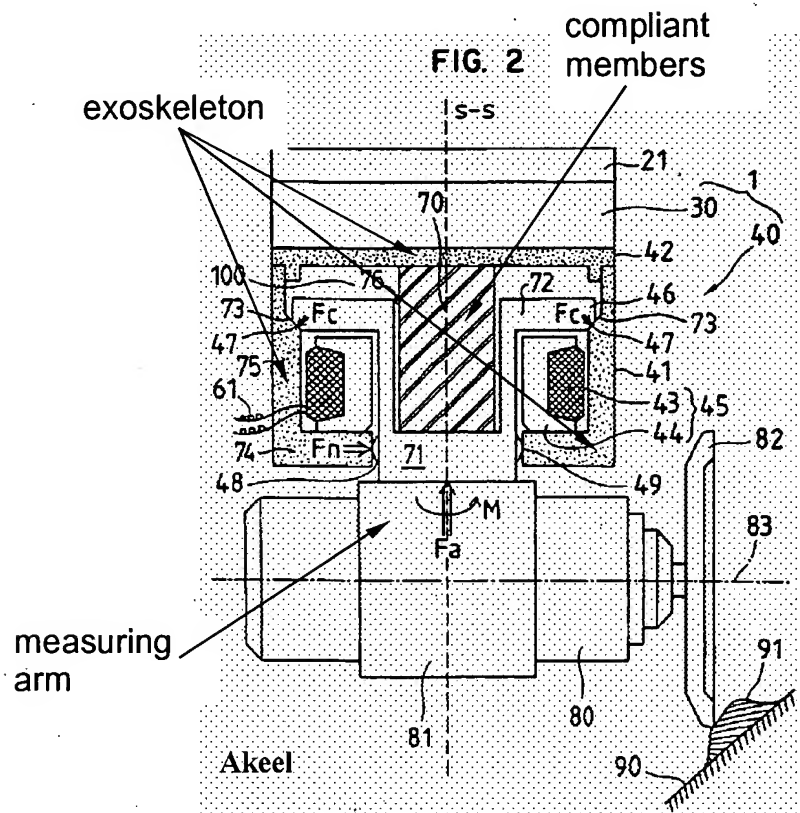
having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 4,676,002 to Slocum as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of US 4,326,155 to Groebeler. Slocum discloses a positioning system having all of the elements stated previously. However, Slocum does not express disclose the employment of a probe member attached to the articulated arm for measuring coordinate position or acquiring geometry information being a tool or instrument. Groebeler discloses a positioning system (i.e. robotic arm) having a probe mounted in conjunction with a tool (see Fig 2 below) to obtain geometric and/or position information. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ a probe and tool having the means to measure geometric and position, as taught by Groebeler, modifying the positioning system disclosed by Slocum, thus providing a sensory guide means for robot actuated tools such as grippers welding heads, positioning, measuring and counting devices, etc. that perform a control function without physically contacting the work piece being sensed (Groebeler: col. 1, lines 10-15).



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7. Claim 74 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 5,796,229 to Akeel. Akeel discloses a method and apparatus for damping external perturbations (i.e. reduction in vibrations and increased damping) encountered by an articulated measuring arm (71) (see Fig. 2 below) including supporting the arm at a plurality of locations with compliant member (70) that position at least a portion of the articulated the arm within an exoskeletal structure. Akeel discloses the claimed invention except for a plurality (i.e. multiple) elastic elements. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ multiple elastic elements, essentially splitting the compliant member (70) into a plurality of members, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8 (CA7 1977).



Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 39, 41 and 45-72 are allowed over the Prior Art of record.
9. Claims 16-18 and 32-38 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The Applicant is invited to review PTO 892 form accompanying this Office Action for relevant art regarding the instant invention.
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John Fitzgerald whose telephone number is (571) 272-2843. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hezron Williams, can be reached on (571) 272-2208. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you

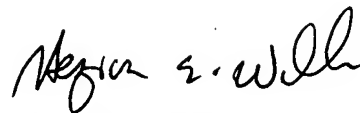
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have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature, possibly "JF", in black ink.

JF

07/25/2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hezron Williams".

HEZRON WILLIAMS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800